

# AWARNESS – RESPONSIBILITY – FUTURE

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE  
THE AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU STATE MUSEUM  
4-5 JULY 2017

**DRAFT**

## **Conference goals and objectives:**

The knowledge that was given to us by Witnesses obliges us to launch a debate on challenges in education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust that we face at present and will be facing in the future. The Conference will be attended by prominent intellectuals as well as representatives of the memorial sites and museums from all over the world who encourage reflection on the present state and importance of historical education at memorial sites. The program encompasses presentations including the results of the most recent research and good practice.

The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foundation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in July 2017 will be an inspiration not only for the evaluation of the current educational activity, but also an attempt to reflect on the message of Auschwitz and the Holocaust, its timeliness and significance for the contemporary generations. It is therefore worth undertaking a critical review of the methodological guidelines and practice in education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust as well as posing a question how it will be developed and implemented in the future.

The international debate is an opportunity to emphasize the role of Auschwitz and other museums and memorial sites play in shaping the historical awareness of the young generation and adults to disseminate the knowledge, promote the attitudes of social responsibility and prevent the crime of genocide.

## **Issues:**

The main areas of concern are:

- Auschwitz Message – Particularism Versus Universalism
- Modern Representations and Reception of Auschwitz
- Witnesses of History as Memory Depositories
- Carriers of Memory – Material Records and New Technologies
- Visits at the Memorial Sites as Exceptional Educational Experience
- Shoah – Challenge for the Future

Conference languages: English and Polish

## **Organizer:**

The International Center for Education about Auschwitz at the Holocaust  
at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

**4 July 2017 (Tuesday)**

**9:30 CONFERENCE OPENING**

*Dr. Piotr M.A. Cywiński*, Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

**10:00-12:30 INAUGURATION PANEL**

*Since Auschwitz nothing has happened that would prevent another Auschwitz from happening again. Before Auschwitz, Auschwitz was unimaginable. That is no longer so today (Imre Kertész)*

- What questions ask visitors themselves at the memorial sites concerning threats to the world around us?
- Do they find answers?
- What are the challenges of the memorial sites in shaping the universal reflection on Shoah?
- The experience of the memorial sites in the world that is still marked by xenophobia, anti-semitism, and intolerance.

*Sara Bloomfield, Dr. Piotr M.A. Cywiński, Dr. Frédérique Neau-Dufour, Avner Shalev (to be confirmed)*

Moderator: *Marek Zajac*

Break (12:30-13:00)

**13:00-15:00 PANEL WITH PARTICIPATION OF SURVIVORS**

*Difficult Returns – the Auschwitz Museum in Reminiscences of Former Prisoners*

Moderator: *Christoph Heubner*

Lunch (15:00-16:00)

### **16:00-18:00 PANEL 3**

#### ***Auschwitz and the Holocaust Message - Particularism Versus Universalism***

- What is the message of Auschwitz and the Holocaust at present?
- How has it changed over the subsequent decades?
- Auschwitz and the Holocaust and the problems of the modern world.

*Prof. Yehuda Bauer (to be confirmed), Rabbi Irving Greenberg, Prof. Deborah Lipstadt, Romani Rose, Bp. Grzegorz Ryś, Prof. Nikolaus Wachsmann*

Moderator: *Prof. Barbara Engelking*

Dinner (19:00-20:30)

### **5 July 2017 (Wednesday)**

Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

### **9:00-11:00 PANEL 4**

#### ***Modern Representations and Reception of Auschwitz***

- How to present the problem – different types of narration, but common experience (literature, art, film).
- What impact can the culture have on education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust?
- How to spread the message among various groups of recipients?
- The place of Auschwitz and the Holocaust in the conscious of the young generation and adults.

*Affinity Konar, Prof. Marek Kucia, Michal Rovner, Prof. Tadeusz Lubelski, Marek Zajac*

Moderators: *Pawel Sawicki, Jacek Stawiski (to be confirmed)*

Coffee break (11:00-11:30)

## **11:30-13:30 Panel discussions**

### **PANEL 5**

#### *Witnesses of History as Memory Depositories*

- Witnesses of history and their testimonies.
- The truth of the testimony and the authenticity of the experience.
- Particularism of a testimony confronted with the collective tragedy.

### **PANEL 6**

#### *Importance of Material Records in Education*

Dilemmas related to preserving the remains of the former concentration and dead camps: structures and objects, archival records, and works of art.

Lunch (13:30-14:30)

## **14:30-16:30 Panel Discussions**

### **PANEL 7**

#### *Visits at the Memorial Sites as Exceptional Educational Experience*

- The role of the memorial site in education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust.
- Education in situ – possibilities and limitations.
- Study visits at the memorial sites (evaluation of different forms and types).

### **PANEL 8**

#### *Carriers of Memory – Material Records and New Technologies*

- Audio-visual and hologram testimonies – virtual meetings with a witness.
- New technologies supporting education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust (on-line lessons, virtual visits, etc.)

Coffee break (16:30-17:00)

## **17:00-18:30 EVALUATION PANEL**

*I knew that history must be told. Not to transmit an experience is to betray it  
(Elie Wiesel)*

- What innovative educational solution should be adopted in the context of the changing reality?
- Education at memorial sites and school education – does the Memory of Shoah shape a responsible society?

*Prof. Michael Berenbaum, Andrzej Kacorzuk, Dr. Noa Mkayton, Dr. Christa Schikorra*

Moderator: *Anna Miszewska*

Farewell dinner (19:00-20:00)

## **OPTIONAL PROGRAM**

### **3 July 2017 (Monday)**

Arrival and accommodation

15:00-18:00

Group I – Following traces of Victims and Witnesses – visiting chosen historical spaces of Auschwitz, including Blocks 2 and 3.

Group II – Preserve for the future – preservation and educational challenges

Dinner (18:30-20:00)

### **6 July 2017 (Thursday)**

Breakfast (7:30-8:30)

9:00-12:00 – optional visit at The National Museum in Krakow

**The International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust  
The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum**

**[www.auschwitz.org](http://www.auschwitz.org)**